

# Rare Plants of Louisiana



## *Rhynchospora ciliaris* - ciliate beakrush Sedge Family (Cyperaceae)

**Rarity Rank:** S2/G4

	1	2	3	4	5
State					
Global					
	imperiled		rare		secure

**Range:** AL, FL, GA, LA, MS, NC, SC

### **Recognition:**

- Perennial sedge up to 70 cm tall, spikelets chestnut brown and terminating the stem in a single cluster to 1.5 cm across
- Leaves basally disposed, having broad blades with a noticeably short taper at the tip.
- Leafy bracts among the inflorescence distinctly ciliate, hence the specific epithet “*ciliaris*”
- Achenes chestnut brown with a pale hump in the center, biconvex, lightly pitted, 1.5 to 2.0 mm long, and 1.3 to 2.0 mm broad
- Perianth bristles usually 6, the longest not exceeding half the length of the achene body; bristles with upwardly pointing barbs

**Flowering Time:** Fruiting late spring to fall

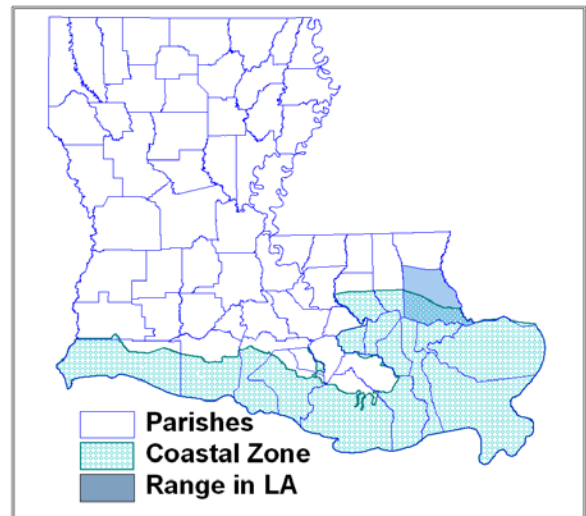
**Light Requirement:** Full sun

### **Wetland Indicator Status:**

OBL – almost always in wetlands

### **Habitat:**

Longleaf pine flatwoods savannahs; can occur in roadside ditches, and also utility corridors which somewhat preserve pine savannah ground cover species which are absent in adjacent areas due to densely stocked trees (pine plantations).



### **Threats:**

- Residential or commercial development
- Conversion to slash or loblolly pine plantations (excess shade, soil disturbances such as bedding, herbicides used in site prep, etc)
- Hydrological alterations such as ditching and bedding
- Soil damage from timber harvesting and planting activities (eg. bedding)
- Fire exclusion or inappropriate fire regime

### **Beneficial Management Practices:**

- Use of growing season prescribed fire (April-June) at a frequency of every 1 to 3 years
- Conduct logging only during very dry periods

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- Refrain from bedding, using plowed fire lines and other soil disturbances that may alter natural water flow patterns and free up growing space to exotic or weedy native plants

## LA River Basins: Pearl, Pontchartrain



**Above:** Immature inflorescence of *Rhynchospora ciliaris*.

**Left:** Whole plant of *R. ciliaris* with key identification features labeled.

Specimen images courtesy of LSU Herbarium.

## References:

Godfrey, R. K. and J. W. Wooten. 1981. Aquatic and wetland plants of the southeastern United States: monocotyledons. University of Georgia Press, Athens, GA. 712 pp.

USDA, NRCS. 2007. The PLANTS Database (<http://plants.usda.gov>). National Plant Data Center, Baton Rouge, LA 70874-4490 USA.

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